

# **A Case Study: Assessment of Career Pathways in Maine**

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# A Case Study: Assessment of Career Pathways in Maine

## I. Introduction

The career pathways initiative has been evolving since the 1990's out of a basic need to supply the US economy with an appropriately skilled and educated workforce. Career pathway programs point to the necessity of aligning education and training as a collaborative effort between state and local agencies, educational institutions, and sector industries, which runs contrary to the typical silo approach that currently exists in how these systems function and relate to each other. The *Career Pathways Toolkit: Six Key Elements of Success* was created by social policy researchers on behalf of the US Department of Labor (US DOL) as a step by step guide to help teams implement and assess their programs by addressing cross-agency partnerships, identifying high growth sectors, engaging employers, designing educational programs, identifying funding, aligning policies and programs, and measuring program outcomes. (Social Policy Research Associates, 2011). By utilizing the *Six Key Elements Readiness Assessment Tool*, one of the tools presented in this toolkit, in a retrospective analysis of several career pathway initiatives in Maine, this report provides information about:

1. The effectiveness and potential usefulness of utilizing the *Career Pathways Toolkit: Six Key Elements of Success* for those in Maine who may be interested in developing a career pathway.
2. Whether or not the pathways that were examined addressed the six key elements, and the impact on the outcomes of their initiatives.
3. The application of the *Career Pathway Toolkit* to different sectors. While the primary purpose of this report is to help inform the development of career pathways in the health care sector, it also includes an analysis of a career pathway developed in the area of law enforcement as a way to assess the application and usefulness of the toolkit to other sectors.

## II. Career Pathways

- a. What are career pathways?

US DOL defines career pathways as: "a series of connected education and training strategies and support services that enable individuals to secure industry relevant certification and obtain employment within an occupational area and to advance to higher levels of future education and employment in that area." (Oates, 2012, p. 1)

Career pathways initiatives are a workforce strategy that enables under or semi-skilled workers who are under or unemployed an opportunity to gain industry-recognized credentials and family sustaining employment through the alignment of education, training, and workforce development.

Career pathways offer a clear roadmap of education and training that is centered around sector strategies that engage employer input into the skill sets necessary for employment, stackable education and training that earns post-secondary credentials and labor market value, contextualized learning and

work readiness attainment, accelerated and integrated training and education, industry recognized credentials, multiple entry and exits points, intensive wrap around and case management services, and curriculum design that is accelerated and streamlined for working and non-traditional, adult learners (Gardner-Cladgett & Uhalde, 2012).

b. How do career pathways differ from current educational and training programs?

A career pathway is a cohesive framework that builds cross-agency partnerships and aligns public investments in education, workforce development, social services, and economic development. Cross-agency partnerships foster direct communication between workforce efforts and educators that offer “market-responsive solutions” for businesses and potential employees (Gardner-Cladgett & Uhalde, 2012, p. 6).

The career pathway model encompasses a holistic framework of six key elements necessary for sustainable and replicable educational and training programs: building cross-agency partnerships, identifying an industry sector and engaging employers, designing the program, identifying funding needs and resources, aligning policies and programs, and measuring system change and performance. Key project partners work in collaboration to address each element of the career pathway model on the state and local level (Social Policy Research Associates, 2011).

c. How are career pathways valuable to workforce development?

The career pathways initiative is a valuable workforce strategy that meets employers’ needs and encourages economic growth and productivity, increases training and education relevance to current workforce needs, and raises skill levels and career advancement for lower-skilled, working adults (Gardner-Cladgett & Uhalde, 2012).

### **III. Career Pathway Initiatives in Maine**

This case study analysis looked at the following career pathways, which were already in process or almost completed.

HIRE: Career Pathway in Criminology - The Criminology Career Pathway was developed by MSAD 27 Adult Education and the University of Maine at Fort Kent using the I-Best model HIRE (Holistic Integrated Relevant Employment) Education. The program was established out of the need for new law enforcement officers as the region’s current law enforcement workforce ages out.

Health Information Technology (HIT) Pilot Program – The lead organization on this pathway was Eastern Maine Development Corporation in a partnership with several adult education programs and area employers. The goal of the program was to prepare individuals for employment in entry-level healthcare workforce occupations such as patient registration, medical billing and coding,

medical administrative assistant, medical reception, and medical secretary. Initial program design was based on an existing HIT program in Farmington, Maine.

CNA Eldercare Specialist Program - The program for experienced CNAs employed in long term care was developed at St. Mary's D'Youville Pavilion in central Maine. The St. Mary's program was modeled after the successful "Experienced CNA Certificate Program" for hospital based CNAs developed earlier at Mount Desert Island Hospital.

a. How were the pathways assessed?

The career pathways were assessed using the *Six Key Elements Readiness Assessment Tool*, from the *Career Pathways Toolkit* created by the Social Policy Research Technical Assistance Team of the Department of Labor Workforce Initiative on behalf of the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment, and Training Administration. This was a retrospective assessment given that all three programs were developed without the benefit of the *Career Pathways Toolkit* as a guide for implementation. For each career pathway, the analysis looked at each key element and the extent to which the pathway addressed that element. It then identified potential obstacles or barriers to success as a way to inform the current and future pathway developers about how to implement a successful career pathway.

Pathway developers were contacted via email and telephone for initial consent to participate in the case study. Once consent was given, pathway developers received the full assessment tool in order for them to be acquainted with the framework before the assessment interview. Several qualitative questions were added at the end of the assessment interview in order to compile qualitative data regarding the process of the program developers in creating cross-agency partnerships for the career pathway such as:

- How was the program established?
- What model was chosen and why?
- What were the program successes and shortfalls?

b. What assessment tool was implemented and why was it chosen?

The career pathways *Six Key Elements Readiness Assessment Tool* was chosen because it assessed the Six Key Elements for Success or key areas vital to creating a holistic career pathway:

- Element One: Building cross-agency partnerships and clarifying roles;
- Element Two: Identifying sectors or industry and engaging employers;
- Element Three: Designing education and training programs;
- Element Four: Identifying funding needs and resources;
- Element Five: Aligning policies and programs; and
- Element Six: Measuring system change and performance. (Social Policy Research Associates, 2011).

The tool allows program developers and project managers to assess the four stages of implementation: initiation, planning, implementation, and sustainability of each of the Six Key Elements

associated with creating a career pathway by specifically assessing and targeting barriers to program development (Appendix 1).

- c. Was the tool a useful framework in the assessments?

The framework of the *Six Key Element Assessment Tool* has two distinct purposes: as a guide to career pathway design from initiation to completion and as a guide to assess programs that were previously developed. Career pathway program developers in each of the programs assessed found the assessment tool easy to understand and implement and useful in targeting barriers at each stage of development within the Six Key Elements. Total assessment time of a retrospective review of an established career pathway took approximately two hours to complete, which was quite manageable particularly considering the depth of the assessment framework.

#### **IV. HIRE: Career Pathway in Criminology**

Career pathway leads were: Peter Caron (Director of Adult and Community Education, MSAD #27) and Scott Voisine (Dean of Community Education, University of Maine at Fort Kent (UMFK))

- a. Program Description

The Criminology Career Pathway was designed using the I-Best model HIRE (Holistic Integrated Relevant Employment) Education to address the need to replace an aging law enforcement workforce in the region.

Courses in the HIRE Education Criminal Justice program were based on Washington State's nationally recognized I-Best model (Integrated Basic Education and Skills Program) and include instruction and supports aimed at helping individuals prepare for careers in law enforcement (at the local, state, and federal level) ("I-Best", n.d., para. 1).

Courses for the 27 credit-hour on-line Certificate of Study in Criminal Justice were co-taught by MSAD 27 Adult Education and University of Maine Fort Kent (UMFK) faculty with on-line technical support services offered by UMFK faculty and academic and personal support needs addressed in person by MSAD #27 Adult Education and its partners. All credits in this UMFK on-line certificate program articulate into the campus's Associate Degree in Criminal Justice and its Bachelor's Degree in Rural Public Safety Administration, both of which are available on-line.

- b. Program Assessment

#### **Key Element #1: Build Cross-Agency Partnerships and Clarify Roles**

##### How to Implement Key Element #1

In a comprehensive career pathways system, a diverse group of representatives from state and local public agencies, private and non-profit partners, and employers and members of the business community collaborate to design, craft, and implement a shared vision. Your *local team* forms to design, pilot, launch, and grow a local or regional career pathway system. Your state

*team* supports the local team with administrative policies and legislation that aids local implementation and statewide growth or replication. In addition, senior or political leaders in the state/region actively support the initiative (Flowers, 2010, p.3).

### Assessment of Implementation of Key Element #1

Key agency partners at the local and state level were engaged, two levels of leadership were established through a task force committee and a steering advisory committee coordinating MSAD 27 Adult Education and UMFK. Partners agreed on a common set of goals and shared vision and definition of the career pathways framework (I-Best Model). A labor market analysis was conducted for the initiative.

**Identified Barrier:** The steering advisory committee established verbal agreements for the project, but did not draft a memorandum of agreement (MOA) of partners' and committee members' roles and responsibilities for the duration of the project.

**Recommendations:** A written memorandum of agreement (MOA) defining partner roles and responsibilities would be recommended as a guide to key partners and committee members to encourage transparency and responsibility and to ensure key partners are working from a shared vision.

### **Key Element #2: Identify Sector or Industry and Engage Employers**

#### How to Implement Key Element #2

A first step in developing a comprehensive career pathways system involves conducting a labor market analysis and assessing gaps and assets in order to identify the best sectors around which to build career pathways. Based on this analysis, team should target high-demand and growing state/regional industries and sectors, and seek to engage employers and business consortiums that represent the chosen industries. The team should develop a marketing and outreach strategy, as well as a long-term plan for supporting and sustaining the engagement of employers (Flowers, 2010, p. 3).

### Assessment of Implementation of Key Element #2

Current projected labor market demand and supply was assessed by Regional Work Investment (RWI) and the Maine Department of Labor (MDOL). Law enforcement was identified and selected as a high growth/high demand sector. The education and skill needs of employers were identified and gaps analyzed as well as strengths, weaknesses, and challenges within training programs. Key partners were able to target and engage employers through their (law enforcement) presence on the steering advisory committee. Law enforcement was directly involved in the curriculum design of the program.

**Identified Barrier:** Program developers found it difficult to identify the target student population and market the program to potential adult students once the program was designed.

**Recommendations:** Engaging local and regional economic development centers, chambers of commerce, unemployment and social service agencies would be recommended as ways to reach out to and identify the target student population.

### **Key Element #3: Design Education and Training Programs**

#### How to Implement Key Element #3

In a comprehensive Career Pathways system, programs are designed to provide a clear sequence of education courses and credentials that prepare individuals, regardless of their skill level at the point of entry, for postsecondary education or training and employment. As addressed in element two, programs should be designed around high demand regional/state industries and support career ladders that pay family-sustaining wages. Programs should support a full range of education options leading to credentials, and be supported by state legislation and administrative policies to support sustainability (Flowers, 2010, p. 4).

#### Assessment of Implementation of Key Element #3

This career pathway met a majority of the components of this element. The career pathway was employer-vetted and informed and met the skill requirements of a targeted high-growth sector. The education and training was non-duplicative and students could easily progress along levels of instruction that clearly articulated. Program design allowed for multiple-entry and exit points for students at all three levels and was organized into progressive modules that were clearly articulated. Program training helped workers enter or advance within a specific sector or occupation (law enforcement), regardless of their entry point skills.

Curricula and instructional strategies were contextual and competency based, allowing students to attain work readiness skills. Adult basic education programs clearly articulated with postsecondary academic and career technical programs through co-enrollment and co-instruction. The program was streamlined and accelerated advancement into postsecondary education or employment, depending on the desire of the student. Appropriate assessment tools were in place to determine placement; there was no SAT or Accuplacer test necessary for the certificate program.

The program led to industry-recognized, stackable, postsecondary credentials and was a stepping stone into the Associate's Degree in Criminal Justice and the Bachelor's Degree in Rural Public Safety Administration at UMFK. Wrap around support services such as financial aid, job placement, and career counseling were available to students enrolled in the program. The training was flexible and accessible to adult learners through online and classroom options based on regular university semester timelines.

**Identified Barrier:** Although the program had defined curricula, it lacked a visual and accessible roadmap or lattice (in the form of a flow chart) that explained how students could progress along the career pathway.

**Recommendation:** Program developers could map out all potential pathways leading to postsecondary placement and future employment using a flow chart that would clarify the sequence of courses and



certificates necessary for students to achieve career goals for students. The roadmap could be an effective tool in career counseling and assessment for potential and currently enrolled students.

#### **Key Element #4: Identifying Funding Needs and Sources**

##### How to Implement Key Element #4

A primary function of the career pathways team involves identifying resources necessary to operate career pathway programs and core components of the system, including: program development, professional development, operating costs, and supportive services. State and local partners work together to raise and leverage funding from federal, state, local, and foundation sources (Flowers, 2010, p. 5).

##### Assessment of Implementation of Key Element #4

Partners identified funding for program development, professional development, operating costs, and supportive services including financial aid, WIA Titles, I, II, and IV as well as TANF, Parents as Scholars, and other state funding. Partners assessed the financial resources necessary for covering the training costs of individual participants, which included improving counseling and assistance to students accessing student aid (Title IV HEA), paying tuition costs with student aid programs (Pell and state grants), paying tuition and related costs with WIA funding, and covering indirect costs of attendance through TANF and mileage reimbursement.

**Identified Barrier:** The potential for employer-provided training was not considered during the development and design of the program.

**Recommendation:** An initial conversation with local law enforcement officials around leveraging resources for the possibility of student internships could be a step in connecting employers to educational program development and educators to workforce needs. Internships could also be an attractive marketing feature to future students who will gain valuable field experience during their academic completion.

#### **Key Element #5: Align Policies and Programs**

##### How to Implement Key Element #5

Local and state partners identify key policy and program changes and actions necessary to implement the goals and vision of the career pathways initiative. Partners actively coordinate efforts across the region and/or state and establish formal procedures to institutionalize system change. Agencies and programs collaborate to provide professional development across organizations and systems. Measures are used to assess and determine system change and performance (including policy changes for system-wide change) (Flowers, 2010, p.5).

##### Assessment of Implementation of Key Element #5

Local and state partners identified key policy and program changes and action steps necessary to implement the goals and vision of the career pathway initiative, including the LWIB from Aroostook and Washington counties. Administrative policies were assessed for each partner agency (workforce,

education, human services, economic development) and opportunities and barriers to alignment of allowable use of funds and cost-sharing and program eligibility were identified through co-enrollment. A cross-program, cross-agency professional development strategy was put into place through coordination and articulating agreements between MSAD #27 Adult Education, UMFK, and Northern Maine Community College (NMCC).

**Identified Barrier:** No barriers were identified. A cross-program, cross-agency professional development strategy has been put into place through coordination and articulating agreements between MSAD #27 Adult Education, UMFK, and Northern Maine Community College (NMCC).

**Recommendations:** No additional recommendations were made.

## **Key Element #6: Measure System Change and Performance**

### How to Implement Key Element #6

The leadership team will measure system change and performance by: defining system and program outcomes, decide on collection methods, establish how the data will be stored, tracked, and shared, and analyze data, revisit desired outcomes, and assess program progress and sustainability (Social Policy Research Associates, 2011, p. 53).

### Assessment of Implementation of Key Element #6

Program developers understand the value of program and performance evaluation in measuring overall system change. Program developers anticipate using longitudinal data collection and analysis measures in the form of stakeholder surveys, academic course evaluations, and statewide labor statistics for ongoing program evaluation and continued workforce needs. Note that this program is still in development.

**Identified Barrier:** There was no written agreement (MOA) established between partners defining the actual steps involved in evaluating the program outcomes, future workforce needs and funding (whether the program was grant or privately funded).

**Recommendations:** A written memorandum of agreement (MOA) defining the methodology, data collection, and data analysis necessary for ongoing evaluation of program outcomes and future workforce needs and funding would be recommended to ensure future sustainability of the career pathway.

#### c. Was the tool a useful framework in this assessment?

Program developers felt that the assessment tool was extremely helpful in assessing the progression of each stage of program development and in identifying barriers that needed to be resolved. They found the tool easy to use and helpful in determining the phase of completion of each component of the six key elements. The tool encouraged program developers to think about education and workforce development from a holistic or systemic perspective, which is still a new concept for educators, employers, and local workforce initiative boards.

#### d. Program Successes

This career pathway has articulating agreements and direct coordination between adult education, community college, and university systems, which is vital in empowering adult students to attain Associate and Bachelor level training and education. The greatest success of this model is its articulation agreements between educators in adult education, career and training centers, and the community college and university that were involved, which allowed for a streamlined and time effective process for adults in the workforce to attain not only an industry-recognized credential, but also the possibility of obtaining an Associate's or Bachelor's level education. This career pathway model could be replicated statewide or regionally to provide workforce training and education in high demand industries, such as healthcare, construction, and green energy technology.

#### e. Program Shortfalls

This career pathway was extremely comprehensive and attractive to adults in the workforce looking for a change in career or as a way to gain credentials to attain higher paying jobs and the ability to broaden their career opportunities in law enforcement. The program needed a strategic marketing plan that highlighted all the benefits for the target population. This has been identified through the assessment outcome, and should be easily implemented through cross-agency partnerships with local chambers of commerce, workforce boards, law enforcement, CareerCenters and the Maine Department of Labor.

### V. Health Information Technology (HIT) Pilot Program

Career pathway leads were: Theresa Mudgett (Regional Coordinator, Health Care Sector Grant, Program Specialist, Eastern Maine Development Corporation-EMDC), Gregg Leavitt (Director, Bangor Adult Education), and Jennifer McBee (Director of Training & Education, Director of Medical Records & Referrals, Penobscot Community Health Care).

#### a. Program Description

The goal of the twelve month program was to prepare individuals for employment in entry-level healthcare workforce occupations such as patient registration, medical billing and coding, medical administrative assistant, medical reception, and medical secretary. Initial program design was based on an existing Health Information Technology (HIT) program in Farmington, Maine.

Program graduates were eligible to sit for the Medical Administrative Assistant Certification provided online by the National Healthcareer Association (NHA) and will have completed the following program coursework: Microsoft Office: Word and Excel (60 hours), HIPAA (25 hours), Medical billing/coding (75 hours), Electronic Health Records (33 hours), Medical Office Simulation (40 hours), Writing for the Workplace (55 hours), Anatomy and Physiology (52 hours), a basic CPR course, and a Customer Service Seminar offered by Husson University Hospitality Program.

## **Key Element #1: Build Cross-Agency Partnerships and Clarify Roles**

### How to Implement Key Element #1

In a comprehensive career pathways system, a diverse group of representatives from state and local public agencies, private and non-profit partners, and employers and members of the business community collaborate to design, craft, and implement a shared vision. Your *local team* forms to design, pilot, launch, and grow a local or regional career pathway system. Your *state team* supports the local team with administrative policies and legislation that aids local implementation and statewide growth or replication. In addition, senior or political leaders in the state/region actively support the initiative (Flowers, 2010, p. 3).

### Assessment of Implementation of Key Element #1

Key agency partners at the local and state level were engaged. Leadership in the form of a steering advisory committee included: Eastern Maine Development Corporation (EMDC) and adult education directors from Ellsworth, Bucksport, Piscataquis County, and Bangor. Also involved were HIT Managers, Human Resource Managers, Medical Records Department Directors and IT Department Directors from the following health care organizations: Eastern Maine Healthcare Systems-HR, Eastern Maine Medical Center-HIT Dept (EMMC), Blue Hill Memorial Hospital-HR, Mayo Regional Hospital-Medical Records and IT, Mount Desert Island Hospital-HIT Dept. (MDI), and Penobscot Community Health Care (PCHC) Training.

Partners agreed on a common set of goals and shared vision and definition of the career pathways framework. Healthcare employers provided a labor market analysis for the initiative. The training opportunity was advertised at the different adult education offices, the Bangor CareerCenter, Eastern Maine Development Corporation through the Health Care Sector Grant website, as well as through emails to various organizations such as DHHS, Penquis, and Women, Work and Community.

**Identified Barrier:** The steering advisory committee established verbal agreements for the project, but did not draft a memorandum of agreement (MOA) of partners' and committee members' roles and responsibilities for the duration of the project.

**Recommendations:** A written memorandum of agreement (MOA) defining partner roles and responsibilities would be recommended as a guide to key partners and committee members to encourage transparency and responsibility and to ensure key partners are working from a shared vision.

## **Key Element #2: Identify Sector or Industry and Engage Employers**

### How to Implement Key Element #2

A first step in developing a comprehensive career pathways system involves conducting a labor market analysis and assessing gaps and assets in order to identify the best sectors around which to build career pathways. Based on this analysis, team should target high-demand and growing state/regional industries and sectors, and seek to engage employers and business consortiums that represent the chosen industries. The team should develop a marketing and outreach strategy, as well as

a long-term plan for supporting and sustaining the engagement of employers (Flowers, 2010, p. 3).

### Assessment of Implementation of Key Element #2

Healthcare was identified and selected as a high growth/high demand sector. Current projected labor demand and supply was assessed and the education and skill needs of employers were identified and gaps analyzed, as well as strengths, weaknesses, and challenges within training programs through conversations with healthcare employers (Blue Hill Memorial, EMMC, PCHC, MDI, Mayo). Key partners were able to target and engage employers through conference calls and meetings held between EMDC, Adult Ed, and healthcare employers. Healthcare employers were directly involved in the curriculum design of the program; for example, the initial Biology course was replaced with Anatomy and Physiology and Excel was added to the Microsoft course based on employer input.

**Identified Barrier:** No barriers were identified. Healthcare was identified and selected as a high growth/high demand sector. Healthcare employers were directly involved in the curriculum design of the program.

**Recommendations:** No additional recommendations were made.

### **Key Element #3: Design Education and Training Programs**

#### How to Implement Key Element #3

In a comprehensive Career Pathways system, programs are designed to provide a clear sequence of education courses and credentials that prepare individuals, regardless of their skill level at the point of entry, for postsecondary education or training and employment. As addressed in element two, programs should be designed around high demand regional/state industries and support career ladders that pay family-sustaining wages. Programs should support a full range of education options leading to credentials, and be supported by state legislation and administrative policies to support sustainability (Flowers, 2010, p. 4).

### Assessment of Implementation of Key Element #3

The career pathway is employer-vetted and informed and meets the skill requirements of a targeted high-growth sector. Volunteers from Penobscot County Health Center assisted in interviewing potential students for the program. The education and training is non-duplicative and students can easily progress along levels of instruction that clearly articulate. Program design allows for multiple-entry and exit points for students and is organized into progressive modules that are clearly articulated. Program training helps workers enter or advance within a specific sector or occupation (health information technology), regardless of their entry point skills. Curricula and instructional strategies are contextual and competency based, allowing students to attain work readiness skills. Wrap around support services such as financial aid, job placement, and career counseling are available to students enrolled in the program. The training is flexible and accessible to adult learners.

**Identified Barrier:** Although the program has defined curricula, it lacks a visual roadmap or lattice (in the form of a flow chart) that explains how students can progress along the career pathway.

**Recommendations:** Program developers could map out all potential pathways leading to postsecondary placement and future employment using a flow chart that would clarify the sequence of courses and certificates necessary to achieve career goals for students. The roadmap could be an effective tool in career counseling and assessment for potential and enrolled students.

#### **Key Element #4: Identifying Funding Needs and Sources**

##### How to Implement Key Element #4

A primary function of the career pathways team involves identifying resources necessary to operate career pathway programs and core components of the system, including: program development, professional development, operating costs, and supportive services. State and local partners work together to raise and leverage funding from federal, state, local, and foundation sources (Flowers, 2010, p. 5).

##### Assessment of Implementation of Key Element #4

Partners identified funding for program development, professional development, operating costs, and supportive services through the Maine Healthcare Sector Grant. Additional funding resources were brokered through EMDC Workforce Development and provided support for partial costs of the program. EMDC WIA funds provided the majority of support services needed by the trainees for this program. AS originally designed, employer sponsored internships were offered for participants during the last 8-10 weeks of the program, but after further consideration, these internships were postponed until participants finished the program.

**Identified Barrier:** No barriers were identified. Partners identified funding for program development, professional development, operating costs, and supportive services through the Maine Healthcare Sector Grant. Additional funding resources were brokered through the EMDC Workforce Development fund and provided support for partial costs of the program. EMDC WIA funds provided the majority of support services needed by the trainees for this program.

**Recommendations:** No additional recommendations were made.

#### **Key Element #5: Align Policies and Programs**

##### How to Implement Key Element #5

Local and state partners identify key policy and program changes and actions necessary to implement the goals and vision of the career pathways initiative. Partners actively coordinate efforts across the region and/or state and establish formal procedures to institutionalize system change. Agencies and programs collaborate to provide professional development across organizations and systems. Measures are used to assess and determine system change and performance (including policy changes for system-wide change) (Flowers, 2010, p.5).

## Assessment of Implementation of Key Element #5

Local and state partners identified key policy and program changes and action steps necessary to implement the goals and vision of the career pathway initiative, including the LWIB from the Tri-county area. Administrative policies were assessed for each partner agency (workforce, education, human services, economic development) and opportunities and barriers for alignment of allowable use of funds and cost-sharing and program eligibility were identified.

**Identified Barrier:** There were no articulation agreements with the local community college or university for this program.

**Recommendations:** Adult education directors are encouraged to pursue the conversation around how future programs could develop articulation agreements to create streamlined education and training programs.

## **Key Element #6: Measure System Change and Performance**

### How to Implement Key Element #6

The leadership team will measure system change and performance by: defining system and program outcomes, decide on collection methods, establish how the data will be stored, tracked, and shared, and analyze data, revisit desired outcomes, and assess program progress and sustainability (Social Policy Research Associates, 2011, p. 53).

## Assessment of Implementation of Key Element #6

Program developers understand the value of program and performance evaluation in measuring overall system change. Program developers will use longitudinal data collection and analysis measures in the form of stakeholder surveys, academic course evaluations, and statewide labor statistics for ongoing program evaluation and continued workforce needs.

**Identified Barrier:** There is no written agreement (MOA) established between partners defining the actual steps involved in evaluating the program outcomes, future workforce needs and funding (whether the program is grant or privately funded).

**Recommendations:** A written memorandum of agreement (MOA) defining the methodology, data collection, and data analysis necessary for ongoing evaluation of program outcomes and future workforce needs and funding would be recommended to ensure future sustainability of the career pathway.

- b. Was the tool a useful framework in this assessment?

Program developers found the assessment tool was extremely helpful in assessing the progression of each stage of program development and in identifying barriers that needed resolve. They found the tool easy to use and helpful in determining the phase of completion of each component of the Six Key Elements. The tool encourages program developers to think about education and workforce development from a holistic or systemic perspective, which is still a new concept for educators, employers, and local

workforce initiative boards. Program developers recommended that a shorter, regional assessment tool be developed that could be connected to the longer assessment tool, if desired. This would be easier to implement and less overwhelming in the initial stages of regional program development.

#### c. Program Successes

This career pathway pilot program was successful in engaging educators, employers, and economic development centers to collaborate on healthcare workforce initiatives, leading to broader conversations on how the region can reinforce the economic need to streamline education to better suit healthcare employer needs. The program could easily be duplicated on regional and state levels implementing the current template, courses, and program descriptions. Out of the 12 program participants, 9 are either employed within the healthcare sector or scheduled for an internship with a healthcare employer. The advisory committee has a deeper understanding of the role cross-agency collaboration plays in providing support for adult learners. Plans to offer the HIT program to a future cohort in spring 2013 are underway with much support from its key partners.

#### d. Program Shortfalls

Of the twelve participants, only three did not complete the program. Originally, employer sponsored internships were offered during the last 8-10 weeks of the six month program, which proved too intense for students and were postponed until after participants finished the program. Future programs will be one year in length in order to adequately accommodate for the heavy academic and internship workloads.

Program developers would have ideally preferred a longer recruitment period, allowing for more thorough assessments of student skills and placement. To improve the courses, program developers would split the Work Ready courses into two modules: Career Exploration and soft skills for the workplace in the beginning of the program and resume building at the end of the program. A short follow-up survey to all program participants, educators, and employers would be helpful to measure the system change and participant performance in the program.

## **VI. CNA-Eldercare Specialist Certificate Program**

Career pathway leads were: Ed Latham (RN, FNGNA), Nicole Morin-Scribner (SPHR-Director Human Resources and Learning, St. Mary's Health System), Harry J. Simones (Regional Coordinator, Health Care Grant, Central Western Maine Workforce Investment Board).

#### a. Program Description

The program for experienced CNAs employed in long term care was developed at St. Mary's D'Youville Pavilion in central Maine. St. Mary's program was modeled after the successful Experienced CNA Certificate Program for hospital based CNAs developed earlier at Mount Desert Island Hospital. Incumbent CNAs at D'Youville took part in 12, eight hour training modules (96 hours) covering everything including culture change, diabetes, skin/wound care to end of life care. Successful trainees



received industry recognized certificates and 9.6 CEUs from the local community college. Turning this pilot program into an industry recognized certificate program is a future goal that is in process.

## **Key element #1: Build Cross-Agency Partnerships and Clarify Roles**

### How to Implement Key Element #1

In a comprehensive career pathways system, a diverse group of representatives from state and local public agencies, private and non-profit partners, and employers and members of the business community collaborate to design, craft, and implement a shared vision. Your local *team* forms to design, pilot, launch, and grow a local or regional career pathway system. Your state *team* supports the local team with administrative policies and legislation that aids local implementation and statewide growth or replication. In addition, senior or political leaders in the state/region actively support the initiative (Flowers, 2010, p. 3).

### Assessment of Implementation of Key Element #1

Key project partners included: St. Mary's D'Youville Pavilion, Lewiston, Central Maine Community College, and Central Western Maine Workforce Investment Board. The Special Projects Advisory Group (SPAG) of Region 2, Local Workforce Board consulted with Ann Sossong of the University of Maine School of Nursing and Victoria Coffey of the Penobscot Job Corps on creating appropriate curriculum for the region. Support services for students were provided by the HR department of the employer.

**Identified Barrier:** Cross agency partnerships did not include human service agencies, although support services were provided by the HR department by the employer.

**Recommendations:** Cross agency collaboration with human services agencies could offer additional support services for students, which would benefit the employer as well as the students.

## **Key Element #2: Identify Sector or Industry and Engage Employers**

### How to Implement Key Element #2

A first step in developing a comprehensive career pathways system involves conducting a labor market analysis and assessing gaps and assets in order to identify the best sectors around which to build career pathways. Based on this analysis, team should target high-demand and growing state/regional industries and sectors, and seek to engage employers and business consortiums that represent the chosen industries. The team should develop a marketing and outreach strategy, as well as a long-term plan for supporting and sustaining the engagement of employers (Flowers, 2010, p.3).

### Assessment of Implementation of Key Element #2

Healthcare was identified as the sector and eldercare was selected as a high growth/high demand area within the sector. Current projected labor demand and supply was assessed and the education and skill needs of employers were identified and gaps analyzed, as well as strengths, weaknesses, and challenges within training programs. Healthcare employers were directly involved in the curriculum

design of the program; for example, certain CNA curriculum content was revised by the healthcare employer to suit the needs of a long-term care setting. The employer provided upwards of \$11,000 in leveraged resources to the project.

**Identified Barrier:** No barriers were identified. Healthcare was identified and eldercare was selected as a high growth/high demand sector. Healthcare employers were directly involved in the curriculum design of the program.

**Recommendations:** No additional recommendations were made.

### **Key Element #3: Design Education and Training Programs**

#### How to Implement Key Element #3

In a comprehensive Career Pathways system, programs are designed to provide a clear sequence of education courses and credentials that prepare individuals, regardless of their skill level at the point of entry, for postsecondary education or training and employment. As addressed in element two, programs should be designed around high demand regional/state industries and support career ladders that pay family-sustaining wages. Programs should support a full range of education options leading to credentials, and be supported by state legislation and administrative policies to support sustainability (Flowers, 2010, p. 4).

#### Assessment of Implementation of Key Element #3

The career pathway is employer-vetted and informed and meets the skill requirements of a targeted high-growth sector. The education and training is non-duplicative and students can easily progress along levels of instruction that clearly articulate. Program training helps workers enter or advance within a specific sector or occupation (nursing). Curricula and instructional strategies are contextual and competency based, allowing students to attain work readiness skills. Two electives are offered in 2-day sessions, which give each CNA a specialty area for ongoing learning and responsibility. By working with the community college on the project, important discussions have occurred and will continue between the community college and the employer related to the development of viable career pathways for CNAs.

**Identified Barrier:** Although the program has defined curricula, it lacks a visual roadmap or ladder (in the form of a flow chart) that explains how students can progress along the career pathway.

**Recommendations:** Program developers could map out all potential pathways leading to postsecondary placement and future employment using a flow chart that would clarify the sequence of courses and certificates necessary to achieve career goals for students. The roadmap could be an effective tool in career counseling and assessment for potential and enrolled students.

### **Key Element #4: Identifying Funding Needs and Sources**

#### How to Implement Key Element #4

A primary function of the career pathways team involves identifying resources necessary to operate

career pathway programs and core components of the system, including: program development, professional development, operating costs, and supportive services. State and local partners work together to raise and leverage funding from federal, state, local, and foundation sources (Flowers, 2010, p. 5).

#### Assessment of Implementation of Key Element #4

Partners identified funding for program development, professional development, operating costs, and supportive services through the Maine Healthcare Sector Grant. Healthcare Sector Grant funding for this project totaled \$19,804. The employer also provided upwards of \$11,000 in leveraged resources to the project.

**Identified Barrier:** No barriers were identified. Partners identified funding for program development, professional development, operating costs, and supportive services through the Maine Healthcare Sector Grant.

**Recommendations:** No additional recommendations were made.

#### **Key Element #5: Align Policies and Programs**

##### How to Implement Key Element #5

Local and state partners identify key policy and program changes and actions necessary to implement the goals and vision of the career pathways initiative. Partners actively coordinate efforts across the region and/or state and establish formal procedures to institutionalize system change. Agencies and programs collaborate to provide professional development across organizations and systems. Measures are used to assess and determine system change and performance (including policy changes for system-wide change) (Flowers, 2010, p. 5).

#### Assessment of Implementation of Key Element #5

Local and state partners identified key policy and program changes and action steps necessary to implement the goals and vision of the career pathway initiative, including the Central Western Maine Workforce Investment Board. The healthcare employer has continued to engage with the local community college to develop programs specific to business needs.

**Identified Barrier:** The initial program did not coordinate with regional career and technical and adult education programs.

**Recommendations:** Aligning the program with regional career and technical education and adult education centers would create streamlined access for entry level or displaced workers to envision attaining an industry-recognized credential while earning a post secondary degree.

#### **Key Element #6: Measure System Change and Performance**

## How to Implement Key Element #6

The leadership team will set measure system change and performance by: defining system and program outcomes, decide on collection methods, establish how the data will be stored, tracked, and shared, and analyze data, revisit desired outcomes, and assess program progress and sustainability (Social Policy Research Associates, 2011, p. 53).

## Assessment of Implementation of Key Element #6

Program developers understand the value of program and performance evaluation in measuring overall system change. Program partners realize that effective collaboration takes time and patience. Regional discussions related to development of a shared program continue with local long term care facilities with the possibility for employers to share training of their collective CNAs in the future. Given that the curriculum is developed, sustaining the program is estimated to be relatively inexpensive.

**Identified Barrier:** No barriers were identified. Follow up surveys were administered.

**Recommendations:** No additional recommendations were made.

b. Was the tool a useful framework in this assessment?

The tool was useful in this assessment in examining the difficulties program partners found with effective and timely collaboration in program design. The assessment tool could have served as a guide to document and organize collaborative efforts and the amount of time spent on each section of the program.

c. Program Successes

Successful program completers were awarded their advanced certification, promoted to a new job position, unique to St. Mary's D'Youville called Restorative Aide-Eldercare Specialist (CNA-Eldercare Specialist) and received an average pay increase of \$1.20 an hour (a 9-11% increase) as a result of this innovative training supported by the Health Care Grant. Thirteen trainees started the program in January of 2012 with 85% (11) completing their training in December of 2012. Additionally, three of the successful program completers have expressed an interest in continuing to advance their careers by pursuing a MedTech certification and perhaps, in the future, a degree in nursing.

The healthcare provider is pleased with the increased knowledge and enhanced self-confidence that the CNA-Eldercare Specialists bring to the workplace and plans to replicate the program at their facility and to share the curriculum and encourage the development of the program at other local long term care facilities.

One of the key successes of this program reported by students during follow-up was the peer mentoring aspect of the curriculum. Students reported having an increased ability to provide feedback and communicate with their peers using the skills acquired during the program, which promotes individual responsibility and leadership as a functional component of teamwork in a healthcare setting.

#### d. Program Shortfalls

Follow-up program evaluations were helpful in identifying program strengths and weaknesses. Students reported that it would have been easier to start putting the curriculum into practice if classes were held more frequently. For example, having two classes a month for six months instead of one class a month for 12 months would have been a better option. Students also voiced that having a clear understanding of the course schedule, requirements, and expectations of the program would have been helpful before the program classes started.

## VII. Overall Conclusions and Recommendations

The *Career Pathways Toolkit: Six Key Elements of Success* should work as it was designed by its developers to serve as a step-by-step guide to help teams implement and assess their programs by addressing cross-agency partnerships, identifying high growth sectors, engaging employers, designing educational programs, identifying funding, aligning policies and programs, and measuring program outcomes. (Social Policy Research Associates, 2011).

By utilizing the *Six Key Elements Readiness Assessment Tool*, one of the tools presented in this toolkit, in this retrospective analysis of several career pathway initiatives in Maine, this analysis found that:

1. The *Career Pathways Toolkit: Six Key Elements of Success* would be a useful approach for those in Maine who may be interested in developing and implementing a career pathway.
2. The extent to which the different career pathways assessed had addressed the Six Key Elements impacted the outcomes of their initiatives.
3. As intended, the *Career Pathway Toolkit* is applicable to different sectors.

The career pathways *Six Key Elements Readiness Assessment Tool* provides a concise and comprehensive assessment framework for career pathways program developers that encourages a holistic view of education and workforce development through direct agency and industry partnerships and collaboration. Following are several specific observations and recommendations based on some themes or issues that were common to the three different career pathways that were assessed.

#### Observation 1:

Program developers did not create MOA's for key partners and committee members during the implementation phase of their projects.

#### Recommendation 1: Utilize MOAs.

Program developers agreed that the framework would have been helpful in guiding their partnerships by reinforcing the importance of creating MOAs at the initial stages of the project to ensure transparency, responsibility, and shared vision by key stakeholders and members of cross-agency partnerships.

### Observation 2:

Program developers did not create roadmaps for their programs which would show how a student could progress along the career pathway.

Recommendation 2: Create visual roadmaps and make them accessible to students and career advisors.

Program developers felt that the credential asset mapping tools provided in the *Career Pathway Toolkit* to create career roadmaps that show how a student would progress along the career pathway would have been helpful not only in defining the program curriculum, but also in the interview process to determine the appropriateness of the program and its fit to potential students.

### Observation 3:

Although program developers found the *Six Key Element Assessment Tool* to be a framework they could use for future career pathway design, they felt it would be easier and less overwhelming to implement if it was split into two shorter versions of the original: one for regional pathways and another for state level pathways.

Recommendation 3: The scale of the assessment and complexity of the tool should match the size of the pathway.

It would be beneficial for program developers to have the *Six Key Element Assessment Tool* split into regional and statewide assessments where the regional tool would connect with the state tool, if needed, as many pilot projects start as regional initiatives that eventually expand to a larger region or statewide level. Having a regional assessment tool would allow for smaller, regional projects to better comprehend the concept of a holistic career pathway program on a regional level that could be sustained with all Six Key Elements in place. This would make it less overwhelming to envision how to move a regional project to a state level initiative.

## VIII. Contact Information

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Social Policy Research Associates. (2011, September). *Career Pathways Toolkit: Six Key Elements for Success*. Washington, DC: United States Department of Labor.

<http://www.workforceinfodb.org/PDF/CareerPathwaysToolkit2011.pdf>

## **X. Appendix 1: Six Key Element Assessment Tool (attached)**

Six Key Element Assessment Tool, Retrieved on May 16, 2013 from:

<https://learnwork.workforce3one.org/view/2001126552919702183/info>



# CAREER PATHWAYS INITIATIVE

## SIX KEY ELEMENTS READINESS ASSESSMENT TOOL

1. Build Cross-Agency Partnerships & Clarify Roles					
<i>Please indicate the phase of implementation of your state for each of the key components listed. Also, indicate the level of priority for each action.</i>	Initiation Phase	Planning Phase	Implementation Phase	Sustain/ Enhance Phase	Priority for Action
1. Key agency partners at the <i>local</i> level, are engaged, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Workforce Investment Board(s) and local workforce development agencies</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Community College(s) and Postsecondary Education Providers</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Adult Basic Education providers</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> TANF providers and Human service agencies</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Economic Development agencies</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Community-based organizations</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Business representative(s)</li> </ul>	1	2	3	4	A B C
2. Key agency partners at the <i>state</i> level are engaged, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> State Workforce Agency</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Adult Basic and Postsecondary Education</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Economic Development</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Human Services</li> </ul>	1	2	3	4	A B C
3. Written memoranda of understanding clearly define the agreed upon roles and responsibilities of partnership members.	1	2	3	4	A B C
4. A leadership or steering committee has been established to guide the process of developing a career pathways system.	1	2	3	4	A B C
5. A labor market analysis and environmental scan of education and training providers has been completed.	1	2	3	4	A B C
6. Partners agree on a definition of a career pathways framework.	1	2	3	4	A B C
7. A set of common goals and shared vision for establishing a career pathways framework has	1	2	3	4	A B C



# Tool Instructions & Facilitator Guide

**Purpose:** The *Six Key Elements Readiness Assessment Tool* assists teams in forming and implementing their career pathways initiative at the local and state levels. This tool help teams assess their state’s career pathways initiative by looking at progress, priorities, gaps, technical assistance needs, and next steps.

**Length of time to complete:** Two to three hours

**Who participates:** There are two options for completing the assessment.

- 1) Team Leader complete online assessment.** Teams may identify one individual (for example the career pathways initiative coordinator) to complete the assessment online.
- 2) Teams complete assessment together during team meeting.** The second option is completing the assessment during an in-person meeting, involving as many members of the leadership team as possible. The team should identify a facilitator to guide the process as well as someone to record issues and ideas that come up through discussion.

**When to use:** Complete the initial assessment as a baseline when career pathway initiative efforts begin. Repeat periodically (at least annually) to assess progress and determine priorities in annual plans.

**Materials:**

- If one individual is completing the assessment, use the online, electronic version.

For teams:

- One, oversized print out of the *Readiness Assessment Tool* (see “Facilitator Tools & Tips”)
- Handouts for each person (in color)
- Markers and tape

# How to Use the Readiness Assessment Tool with Teams

The assessment tool is organized under the *Six Key Elements of Career Pathways Framework* and includes corresponding indicators that are components of each element. Your team will examine each indicator to assess your community's (local, regional, and/or state) progress toward achieving that element. A four-point scale representing the phases of an ongoing development process will help you assess progress. For each indicator, identify the place on the scale that best reflects your current effort and circle the number.

The four-point scale to assess progress is based on the following definitions:

1. **Initiation Phase:** The team has discussed this indicator but has not started planning.
2. **Planning Phase:** The team is engaged in a planning process to agree upon the steps necessary to move forward.
3. **Implementation Phase:** The team has completed planning and is in the process of implementing strategies.
4. **Sustain/Enhance Phase:** Strategies have been fully implemented. The team is managing for sustainability and further enhancement of this indicator.

The priority for action on any indicator can be ranked as high, medium, or low by circling A, B, or C (respectively) in the far right column.

1. Have each team member individually complete the phases of development section of the self-assessment on their handouts. For each indicator, team members will rate the progress using the four-point scale:  
1 = Initiation Phase  
2 = Planning Phase  
3 = Implementation Phase  
4 = Sustain/Enhance Phase
2. Using the oversized version of the chart on the wall, have each team member make a "dot" next to their choices using a marker.
3. Discuss the group's responses, especially where there are wide differences of opinion on progress. Then, have a discussion about whether any additional indicators of progress should be included.
4. Next, each team member will complete the priority section of the self-assessment in the context of a discreet time frame (e.g. the next 6 months). It is helpful to limit the number of high priority activities and to force a few lows in each section.
5. Again, ask all team members to mark their responses on the wall chart and discuss. Identify priority actions for inclusion in your next steps plan.

6. Finally, evaluate your community's overall progress towards achieving the key elements, and discuss some goals and/or next steps for making greater progress. The items flagged as a "priority for immediate action" may guide you in this last step. You will then use the Next Steps Tool, to record your next steps and technical assistance needs.

# 1. Build Cross-Agency Partnerships & Clarify Roles

<p><i>Please indicate the phase of implementation of your state for each of the key components listed. Also, indicate the level of priority for each action.</i></p>	Initiation Phase	Planning Phase	Implementation Phase	Sustain/Enhance Phase	Priority for Action
<p>1. Key agency partners at the <i>local</i> level, are engaged, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Workforce Investment Board(s) and local workforce development agencies</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Community College(s) and Postsecondary Education Providers</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Adult Basic Education providers</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> TANF providers and Human service agencies</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Economic Development agencies</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Community-based organizations</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Business representative(s)</li> </ul>	1	2	3	4	A B C
<p>2. Key agency partners at the <i>state</i> level are engaged, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> State Workforce Agency</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Adult Basic and Postsecondary Education</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Economic Development</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Human Services</li> </ul>	1	2	3	4	A B C
<p>3. Written memoranda of understanding clearly define the agreed upon roles and responsibilities of partnership members.</p>	1	2	3	4	A B C
<p>4. A leadership or steering committee has been established to guide the process of developing a career pathways system.</p>	1	2	3	4	A B C
<p>5. A labor market analysis and environmental scan of education and training providers has been completed.</p>	1	2	3	4	A B C

## 1. Build Cross-Agency Partnerships & Clarify Roles

<i>Please indicate the phase of implementation of your state for each of the key components listed. Also, indicate the level of priority for each action.</i>	Initiation Phase	Planning Phase	Implementation Phase	Sustain/Enhance Phase	Priority for Action
6. Partners agree on a definition of a career pathways framework.	1	2	3	4	A B C
7. A set of common goals and shared vision for establishing a career pathways framework has been developed.	1	2	3	4	A B C
8. Senior or political leaders in the state/region are aware of and have pledged support for the initiative.	1	2	3	4	A B C

## 2. Identify Sector or Industry and Engage Employers

<i>Please indicate the phase of implementation of your state for each of the key components listed. Also, indicate the level of priority for each action.</i>	Initiation Phase	Planning Phase	Implementation Phase	Sustain/Enhance Phase	Priority for Action
1. Current and projected labor demand and supply have been assessed.	1	2	3	4	A B C
2. Sector(s) including high demand and growth industries are identified and selected. List sector(s):	1	2	3	4	A B C
3. The education and skill needs of employers in the state/region have been analyzed and gaps identified.	1	2	3	4	A B C
4. The strengths, weaknesses, challenges, and gaps within the state and region's education and	1	2	3	4	A B C

## 2. Identify Sector or Industry and Engage Employers

<i>Please indicate the phase of implementation of your state for each of the key components listed. Also, indicate the level of priority for each action.</i>	Initiation Phase	Planning Phase	Implementation Phase	Sustain/Enhance Phase	Priority for Action
training programs have been assessed against meeting sector and industry training needs.					
5. The partners have developed an outreach strategy to determine which employers to target and how to engage them.	1	2	3	4	A B C
6. Employers representing targeted industries have been engaged.	1	2	3	4	A B C
7. A plan is in place to support working with employers during various phases of the project (design, launch, operation, and evaluation).	1	2	3	4	A B C

## 3. Design Education and Training Programs

<i>Please indicate the phase of implementation of your state for each of the key components listed. Also, indicate the level of priority for each action.</i>	Initiation Phase	Planning Phase	Implementation Phase	Sustain/Enhance Phase	Priority for Action
1. Occupations and pathways are employer-vetted and informed, and meet the skill needs of targeted high-growth sectors.	1	2	3	4	A B C
2. Education and training is non-duplicative and progressive, clearly articulating one level of instruction to the next and enabling students to move easily between academic and career technical programs, and to and from work.	1	2	3	4	A B C

### 3. Design Education and Training Programs

<i>Please indicate the phase of implementation of your state for each of the key components listed. Also, indicate the level of priority for each action.</i>	Initiation Phase	Planning Phase	Implementation Phase	Sustain/Enhance Phase	Priority for Action
3. Programs are designed with multiple entry points and exit points (on-ramps and off-ramps).	1	2	3	4	A B C
4. Curricula is “chunked” or organized in progressive modules, with each level clearly articulated to the next.	1	2	3	4	A B C
5. Training helps workers enter or advance within a specific sector or occupational field, regardless of their skills at the point of entry.	1	2	3	4	A B C
6. Curricula and instructional strategies are contextual and competency-based; they make work a central context for learning and help students attain work readiness skills.	1	2	3	4	A B C
7. Adult basic education programs are clearly articulated with postsecondary academic and career-technical programs.	1	2	3	4	A B C
8. Programs are designed to accelerate advancement into either postsecondary education or employment, shortening the duration of training or education.	1	2	3	4	A B C
9. Appropriate assessment tools determine placement and advancement, including credit for prior learning.	1	2	3	4	A B C
10. Programs lead to industry-recognized and/or postsecondary credentials that are stackable and articulate to progressively higher-level credentials or degrees.	1	2	3	4	A B C
11. Individualized career plans support an individual’s journey through the pathway and provide “roadmaps” for participants to attain the education, training and credentials they need to reach their goal.	1	2	3	4	A B C
12. Wrap-around support services are available, including job placement services, career and financial aid counseling, especially during points of transition.	1	2	3	4	A B C

### 3. Design Education and Training Programs

<i>Please indicate the phase of implementation of your state for each of the key components listed. Also, indicate the level of priority for each action.</i>	Initiation Phase	Planning Phase	Implementation Phase	Sustain/Enhance Phase	Priority for Action
13. Training is accessible and flexible by site and schedule, reduces or accommodates language and learning barriers, and develops drop-out prevention services or policies.	1	2	3	4	A B C
14. Programs are organized to meet the unique needs of adult learners (including childcare, accommodating work schedules with flexible and non-semester-based scheduling, alternative class times and locations, easy entry and exit points, learning cohorts, and the innovative use of technology).	1	2	3	4	A B C



## 4. Identify Funding Needs and Sources

<p><i>Please indicate the phase of implementation of your state for each of the key components listed. Also, indicate the level of priority for each action.</i></p>	Initiation Phase	Planning Phase	Implementation Phase	Sustain/Enhance Phase	Priority for Action
<p>1. Partners identified funding needs for developing core components of the career pathway system including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Program development</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Professional development</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Operating costs</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Supportive services</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Other</li> </ul>	1	2	3	4	A B C
<p>2. Partners explored funding resources that could support the career pathway system, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> WIA Titles I, II, and IV</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Wagner-Peyser Act funds</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Carl Perkins Act funds</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> TANF funds</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> State funding</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Private foundations</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Employers</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Other</li> </ul>	1	2	3	4	A B C

## 4. Identify Funding Needs and Sources

<p><i>Please indicate the phase of implementation of your state for each of the key components listed. Also, indicate the level of priority for each action.</i></p>	Initiation Phase	Planning Phase	Implementation Phase	Sustain/Enhance Phase	Priority for Action
<p>3. Partners assessed the financial resources necessary for <i>covering the training costs of individual participants</i>, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Improving counseling and assistance to students in accessing student aid (Title IV HEA)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Paying tuition and related costs with student aid programs (e.g. Pell grants, state grant programs)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Paying tuition and related costs with WIA funding (including continued training after initial employment placements toward higher level credentials)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Attracting and expanding employer-provided training, utilization of tax credits, etc.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Covering indirect costs of attendance.</li> </ul>	1	2	3	4	A B C

## 5. Align Policies and Programs

<p><i>Please indicate the phase of implementation of your state for each of the key components listed. Also, indicate the level of priority for each action.</i></p>	Initiation Phase	Planning Phase	Implementation Phase	Sustain/Enhance Phase	Priority for Action
<p>1. Local and state partners identified key policy and program changes and action steps necessary to implement the goals and vision for the career pathways initiative, including coordinating efforts across the state and/or region.</p>	1	2	3	4	A B C
<p>2. Local and state policymakers support a coordinated, systems approach to adult education and training.</p>	1	2	3	4	A B C
<p>3. Administrative policies have been assessed for each of the partner agencies (workforce, education, human services, economic development) and opportunities/barriers to alignment have been identified around the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Allowable uses of funds, including cost-sharing agreements</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Program Eligibility</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Performance reporting requirements</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Financial reporting requirements</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Other</li> </ul>	1	2	3	4	A B C
<p>4. Legislative policy reforms to support a career pathways system have been identified and communicated to relevant authorities and policymakers.</p>	1	2	3	4	A B C
<p>5. A cross-program, and cross-agency professional development strategy is in place.</p>	1	2	3	4	A B C

## 6. Measure System Change and Performance

<i>Please indicate the phase of implementation of your state for each of the key components listed. Also, indicate the level of priority for each action.</i>	Initiation Phase	Planning Phase	Implementation Phase	Sustain/Enhance Phase	Priority for Action
1. A scan of all of the performance measures that are connected to your career pathways programs					
2. Common measures have been identified and are used to evaluate participant outcomes, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Measures that encourage long-term strategies for meeting the needs of low-skilled participants</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Interim measures.</li> </ul>	1	2	3	4	A B C
3. Longitudinal data collection and analysis measures student learning gains, progress along educational pathways, credential attainment, and employment outcomes.	1	2	3	4	A B C
4. Data is used to make program improvements.	1	2	3	4	A B C
5. Regular assessments are used to support continuous improvement, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Conducting regular in-process reviews</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Reviewing overall performance</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Evaluating the performance of partners</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Optimizing scale based on needs for services</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Reevaluating the mission, vision, and goals</li> </ul>	1	2	3	4	A B C

## 6. Measure System Change and Performance

<i>Please indicate the phase of implementation of your state for each of the key components listed. Also, indicate the level of priority for each action.</i>	Initiation Phase	Planning Phase	Implementation Phase	Sustain/Enhance Phase	Priority for Action
6. Evaluations are used to improve career pathways and to maintain (or attract) partnerships.	1	2	3	4	A B C
7. Funding is reserved or secured for external or intensive program evaluations.	1	2	3	4	A B C
8. Data is used to identify labor market changes and to make system changes on a real-time basis.	1	2	3	4	A B C
9. Measures are used to assess and determine system change and performance (including policy changes for system-wide change).	1	2	3	4	A B C
10. A cross-program, and cross-agency professional development strategy is in place.	1	2	3	4	A B C
11. The Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) promote the development of career pathways.	1	2	3	4	A B C